



## **URx FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)**



**Q: *Why are we changing drug plans?***

**A:** *We spend more for prescription drugs than we spend on hospitalization or for doctors. Unfortunately we aren't getting the best results we can from our prescriptions. URx is designed to focus on the best health outcomes while helping people manage their prescription drug choices and costs.*

**Q: *What does this mean to me?***

**A:** *You will still be able to get all the prescriptions you and your doctor choose from the same pharmacies you presently use. The State Plan will contribute to the cost of the prescriptions based on the best scientific and medical evidence. The better the drug treats the medical condition, the more the State Plan will pay toward the total cost.*

**Q: *What does the Class A-F grouping of drugs mean?***

**A:** *A list of drugs called a formulary was developed by Montanans (doctors, pharmacists, and consumers along with the University of Montana Skaggs School of Pharmacy). They were assisted by researchers from the University of Massachusetts Medical School and their affiliates. They looked at the scientific research and medical studies on prescription drugs and graded them from A to F. Drugs with a higher grade have better health outcomes and will cost you less.*

**Q: *How will I know what the State Plan will pay toward my drug?***

**A:** *You will need to know what class your drug falls into. On September 1, 2009 the drug list with class groupings will be available for you to access via the internet. You may also call the telephone numbers listed below for assistance. We will be holding meetings about URx around the state in August through October and you will be invited to attend these meetings.*

**Q: *How many drugs are placed in each level of the formulary?***

**A:** *The formulary drug list ranks drugs based on their medical efficacy and places them in categories that make the most effective prescription drugs the least expensive to the member. There are five levels (A, B, C, D, and F) in which prescription medications are classified. Currently the formulary list contains 10,399 drugs. The following is an estimate of the number of drugs placed in each Level. Please note that each level has drugs ranging from low cost drugs to very expensive drugs. For example, in Level A, there are low cost cholesterol reducing drugs such as Simvastatin and drugs for treatment of Multiple Sclerosis; such as Copaxone (over \$3000).*

- *Level A (Including zero dollar specialty drugs) - 163*
- *Level B - 3188*
- *Level C - 2045*
- *Level D - 327*
- *Level F - 4493*

- *Specialty Class (not including zero dollar specialty drugs) – 183*

*Level F contains previously non-covered drugs. 'Non-covered' drugs have been placed at Level F is to allow members to take advantage of the discounted pricing that has been negotiated. In addition, in most cases, Level F drugs have an alternative available at a higher class.*

***Q: When will I be able to look up the price of my prescription medication?***

***A:*** *On January 1, 2010, an online resource will be available that will allow members to lookup prescription medications and receive a price estimate.*

***Q: How much money has the State saved by implementing the URx pharmacy benefit plan?***

***A:*** *The implementation of the URx pharmacy benefit program has saved the State of Montana \$6.3 million. This savings has been applied to the 2010 member benefit packet which helped offset increases to member premiums.*

***Q: What are generic drugs?***

***A:*** *A generic drug is therapeutically equivalent (contains the same active ingredient(s), is the same strength and the same dosage form) to a brand name drug. It is referred to by its chemical name, and is generally made available when patent protection on the brand name drug expires. Generics account for more than 45% of all medications prescribed in the U.S.*

***Q: Is it important to get generic drugs when possible?***

***A:*** *Yes, many of the generic drugs are available at a higher benefit class. More people are choosing generic drugs because they have the same active ingredients and are used in the body the same way as their original brand-name drugs; they are effective, just as strong and deliver the same medical benefits as brand name drugs and they are less expensive, saving the member in out-of-pocket costs in most situations.*

***Q: My drug is a D or F, what do I do?***

***A:*** *Review the formulary drug list and determine what drug group your medication is in. Drug groups are highlighted in light grey on the formulary and include groups such as penicillin, antivirals, and antidiabetics. Review the other medications available in the same drug group (as your drug) and determine those available to you at a higher drug class (i.e Level A, B, or C). Contact the Ask-A-Pharmacist program (1-888-5-ASK-URX [527-5879] or [askpharmacist@urxmt.com](mailto:askpharmacist@urxmt.com)) and discuss the alternate drug treatments for your condition. Schedule an appointment with your physician to review possible prescription drug alternatives to treat your disease state.*

Level F contains previously non-covered drugs. 'Non-covered' drugs have been placed at Level F is to allow members to take advantage of the discounted pricing that has been negotiated. In most cases, Level F drugs have an alternative available at a higher class.

**Q: Where can I review the information used to classify drugs in the formulary?**

**A:** The formulary drug list was developed by the Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee (PTAC) whose focus is to achieve clinical excellence. The PTAC looked at the scientific research and medical studies on prescription drugs and graded them on the formulary from A to F. The [research and medical studies](#) used to create the formulary are available for both members and providers to review. In order to access the research, members and providers are required to log in.

**Q: How do I get help?**

**A:** Below is contact information you can use to learn more and receive help.



**URx Website**

**[www.urx.mt.gov](http://www.urx.mt.gov) or e-mail [askurx@mt.gov](mailto:askurx@mt.gov)**

**General Information**

**URx (powered by MedImpact)**

1-888-648-6764

**Benefits and Payment Questions**

State Health Care & Benefits

1-800-287-8266 (toll free)

406-444-7462 (Helena area)

**Ask-a-Pharmacist**

1-888-5-ASK-URX (527-5879)